

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith.

May 2013

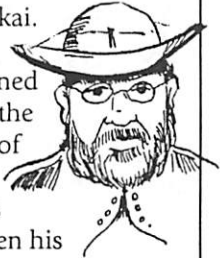
St. Peter Damian Church
Rev. Walter Takuski, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

Fr. Damien of Molokai

The Year of Faith saint for May is Fr. Damien of Molokai.

Born in Belgium in 1840, he joined his brother in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. When his brother couldn't serve the lepers on the Island of Molokai (those with Hansen's disease), Fr. Damien went instead. Horrified by the conditions, Fr. Damien built schools, churches, hospitals and sanitation facilities. He bestowed dignity and hope and served until his death from the disease in 1889.



Truth or white lie?

When a friend asks your opinion, have you hesitated to tell the truth because you fear hurt feelings? When asked, a true friend always speaks the truth. It is gentler to hear a hard truth from a caring friend.

"How beautiful is the gaze with which Jesus regards us - how full of tenderness! Let us never lose trust in the patience and mercy of God."

Pope Francis



Make a difference in the world

Jesus expects us each to do something great in the world, and he doesn't mean just the millionaires or heads of state. Pope Benedict XVI said, "The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness."

Start now. If we think that our contribution can't make a difference or that others will take charge, nothing will get done. Start today, and believe that God will strengthen your efforts. "I can do all things in him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

Share your love. "This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). Mother Teresa once said, "If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one" and your kindness may influence others.

Commit. Find a parish ministry or charity you love and adopt it. Your contribution will benefit the future.

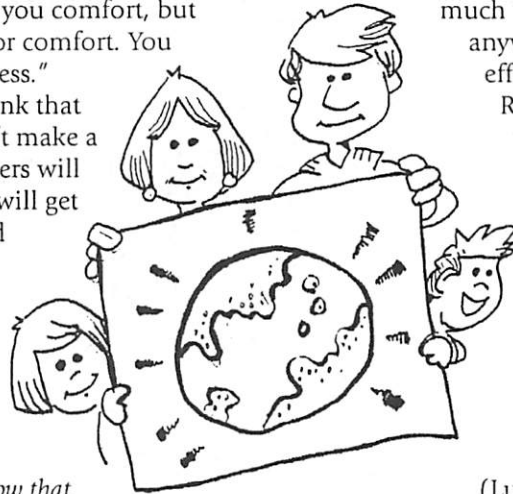
Give your mite. If you don't have much to give, give anyway - time, effort or funds.

Remember the widow's mite:

"I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest ... from her poverty has offered her whole livelihood"

(Luke 21:3-4).

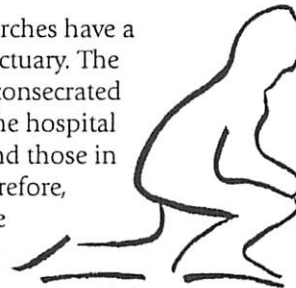
Empower others. Be generous with praise and stingy with criticism. Offering sincere praise and encouragement helps others achieve goals and adds value to the world.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do we genuflect in church?

Most Catholic Churches have a tabernacle in the sanctuary. The tabernacle contains consecrated hosts for people in the hospital or nursing homes, and those in danger of death. Therefore, Jesus is present in the sanctuary: body and



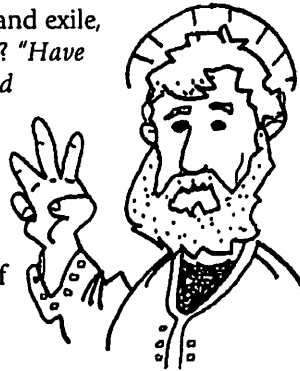
blood, soul and divinity.

When we cross in front of the tabernacle or enter a pew, we honor Christ by genuflecting on the right knee or making a deep bow. We use the right knee because that is considered the side of honor.

A 3-step cure for stress

St. Paul knew stress. He spent time in prison and exile, experienced frustration and conflict. His advice? *"Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:4-7).

"Have no anxiety at all." Step 1 – Rid yourself of worry. There is a difference between concern, which leads us to take steps to be prepared, and



worry, which produces nothing but stress.

"Make your requests known to God." Step 2 – Carry everything to God in prayer. St. Paul added the phrase, "with thanksgiving," to remind us to put our trust completely in the Lord to provide for us.

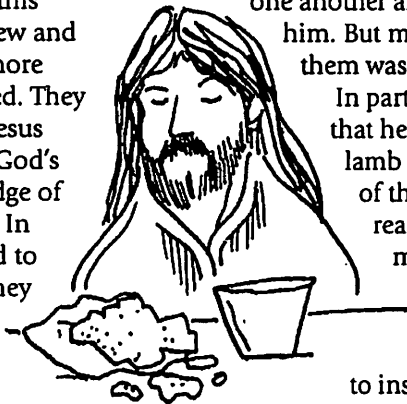
"The peace of God ... will guard your hearts and minds." Step 3 – Keep your mind on God and experience his peace. The perfect peace that only God can give will come to those who keep their minds and hearts focused on Jesus.

from Scripture

John 16:12-15, the coming of the Holy Spirit

This reading is from St. John's account of the Last Supper. By this point, the Apostles knew and accepted that God is more than they had imagined. They also understood that Jesus had a special place in God's plan but their knowledge of his role was imperfect. In this reading, Jesus tried to explain to them that they would understand in time.

By the time the Last Supper took place, the Apostles had spent three years with Jesus, traveling, listening, speaking, and learning from him. Some of what Jesus



taught was quite clear – love God, love one another and tell others about him. But much of what Jesus told them was hard to understand.

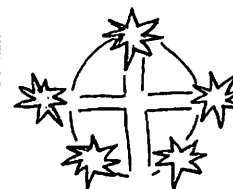
In particular, Jesus told them that he would be the sacrificial lamb who takes away the sins of the world. The Apostles really struggled what this meant. But Jesus let them know the "Spirit of truth" (the Holy Spirit) would come

to instruct them and to make everything clear.

The same is true for us. When we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit, much becomes clear.

Q & A What are the precepts of the Church?

The five precepts of the Church are designed to bring us closer to God through the Mass and penance.



We're to attend Mass on Sundays. As members of the Body of Christ, we're strengthened when we worship together.

We're to confess our sins at least once a year. We all commit sin, often on a daily basis. Yet we see a lack of the sense of sin in our society. Confession brings us to recognize our sinfulness and return us to a state of grace.

We're to receive Holy Communion at least during the Easter season. There are those who think they're never worthy to receive the Eucharist and who never would without this precept.

We're to keep the Holy Days of Obligation. These feasts honoring the Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints who teach us more about our faith.

We're to observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence. These acts of penance take us out of our comfort zone so we can focus on our relationship with Christ.

Feasts & Celebrations

In May we honor Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth. On May 31st, we commemorate the Visitation when Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth to share her joy at being favored by God.

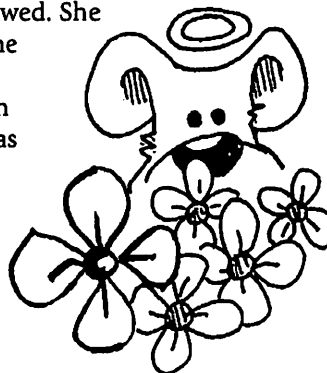
May 1 – St. Joseph the Worker. Entrusted with the care of the Blessed Mother and Jesus, Joseph was a carpenter dedicated to his family and obedient to God.

May 20 – St. Bernadine of Siena (1444). As Franciscan, his boundless energy and joy was put to use running the local hospital during the great plague in Europe. Then, after a dozen

years in solitude, he journeyed across Italy preaching. The symbol of the sun with IHS, the first three letters of Jesus' name in Greek, is attributed to him.

May 22 – St. Rita of Cascia (1457). Unwillingly married off to a cruel husband at the age of twelve, St. Rita spent eighteen unhappy years before being widowed. She then became an

Augustinian nun and was known for her devotion to prayer and charity.



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